

HIGHLIGHTS

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Conferences

Connecting with Others

EBMI/IBC in India

Assisting Fire Victims

Jimmy Martin

**Growing Older
in the Grace of God**



Growing Older in the Grace of God

But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more. My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure. I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign LORD; I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone. (Psalm 71:14-16)

Recently Laurie and I welcomed our seventh grandchild, Judah Kirby Narofsky, to the family. If you are a grandparent, you know how every child comes as a unique and fresh imprint of the image of God. There is nothing that reminds us more of the glory of God and the dignity of humanity than a precious, small, helpless infant. The psalmist said, “O LORD, our LORD how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise...” (8:1-2).

Of course, there is another side to having grandchildren. Someone has well said, “God gives babies to young people!” Those of us approaching “un-young-hood” know the energy, physical stamina, and other qualities that are needed for parents but are not in as large supply as we age.

Which brings me to the topic of “Growing Older in the Grace of God.” For those of you who have been involved in the IBC over the past 25 years or so, the name Bob Marsh is familiar to you. (We happen to have another Bob Marsh in the IBC – Bob and Carol Marsh are a delightful church-planting couple in Darmstadt, Germany. But I am speaking of Bob Marsh the “Elder,” who weighs in at approximately 30 years beyond church planter Bob Marsh.) Bob Marsh the Elder has served, along with Myra, as interim pastor, Bible teacher/preacher, interim General Secretary, and many other roles. Bob’s picture can be seen next to the word, “encouragement,” in the dictionary. Although he said hello to his eighth decade several years ago, he is still among the favorite Bible teachers for IBC conferences. He spoke at our most recent Ministry Leadership Conference in March.

Bob recently wrote an encouraging piece, entitled, “Growing Older in the Grace of God.” I asked and received permission to share it with you. I know you will be encouraged and challenged, regardless of your age. Hear what Bob has to say:

GROWING OLDER IN THE GRACE OF GOD “You will come to the grave in full vigor.” (Job 5:26)

“Even to your old age and gray hair I am He who will sustain you... made you... will carry you... rescue you.” (Isaiah 46:4)

We were seated in the living room of some precious friends in Oberursel, Germany, where we were serving the International Church. One of the four children, beautiful eight-year-old daughter, came in. I knew her, and she knew me. We had taken walks through the village, sat in this living room laughing, and talking together. When she walked into the room I playfully asked, “Now, what is your name? Is it Rumpelstiltskin? Is it Doodlewaddle? Why can’t I remember your name?” She, just as playfully, fired back, “Maybe you are just getting old.” Wham! Ouch! Well, I asked for that barb, but laughed at how she tried to look sweetly innocent of delivering such a blow. Getting old? After letting that sink in a wee bit, I wanted to shout to anyone in hearing range, “Never! Getting old will not define me, for I am determined to GROW OLDER, not GET OLD.” And therein lies a vast difference. However, what is the difference, and how does one dodge what appears to be inevitable, GETTING OLD, and indeed move beyond mere semantics into a reality that could truly be labeled GROWING OLDER?



by Jimmy Martin
General Secretary

IMPRINT

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ATTITUDE AND FOCUS

In Psalm 71:14-16, notice how emphatically the psalmist uses the term 'I WILL!' Whatever else he is stating, he is teaching us that how we come through life, GETTING OLD or GROWING OLDER, depends significantly on ATTITUDE and FOCUS. "I will hope." That is predicated on an attitude, on making a choice to hope. "I will praise." "I will tell, proclaim." He was determined to keep his FOCUS on the goodness of God. There are many features in the process of aging over which we have no control, but we can make a choice to embrace attitudes that reflect hope, cheer, praise, and sharing the good news of God's love. We can make a choice to FOCUS on realities that will make life worth living, and lift us above the dark clouds of doubt and despair.

GETTING OLD has nothing to do with the calendar, with chronology. It has everything to do with attitude, the decisions we make as to how we are going to face life with all of its challenges, disappointments, and irritations. GETTING OLD is an attitude of pessimism, being polluted by pettiness, submitting to the tyrant of trivia, and developing a mentality of the mundane. We GET OLD when our attitude is old, when we leave our dreams behind, when love grows cold, for we are as old as our negative attitudes in life. We GET OLD when our FOCUS is on our complaints, perceived slights, refusal to forgive, fearful thoughts that we allow to dominate, and the loss of our vision for life.

Somewhere along the pathway of life we must learn that our most insidious enemy is not FATHER TIME; it is BROTHER BITTERNESS AND SISTER SOURNESS. FATHER TIME can wrinkle the skin and dim our sight. BROTHER BITTERNESS can pinch the spirit and blind us to the blessings of God that surround us.

Shakespeare's Macbeth plaintively commiserated about life:

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

The writer of Ecclesiastes pessimistically moaned: "Meaningless, Meaningless, everything is meaningless."

Certainly we as children of God reject such dystopian despair, while acknowledging that "for mortals their days are like grass." However, we continue with the certainty "that the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."

GROWING OLDER is in contrast to the stagnant GETTING OLD. The operative term is GROWING! The Moffat translation has a verse in Romans enthusiastically encouraging us to "MAINTAIN THE GLOW" – the glow of the presence of Christ. The glow of knowing the Lord better today than you knew Him yesterday. The glow of focusing on (1) GROWING in enriching the lives of others, (2) GROWING in daily seeking Him in His Word and submitting to His Holy Spirit, (3) GROWING in living a LIFE OF LOVE, and (4) GROWING in preparing to move into His presence when He calls us into His Glory.

So, as a child of God, contrary to that precious girl in Oberusel, I do not have to GET OLD. Developing what Paul taught in Philippians 2:5, THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS, we can daily be GROWING AND GLOWING in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Job 5:26 speaks of our desire to "come to the grave in full vigor, like sheaves gathered in season." The Apostle Paul virtually shouted when he faced inevitable death, "I have fought the good fight, I



Bob and Myra Marsh

have finished the race!!" In GROWING OLDER IN THE GRACE OF GOD, we will face inexplicable events, disappointments, and the challenges of aging. However, we can FOCUS on WHO HE IS, what HE HAS PROMISED, and shake off the doubts that would cause us to merely exist through life. The poet said it well:

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
I shall believe the Hand which never fails
From seeming evil worketh good for me;
And though I weep because those sails are battered,
Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,
I trust in thee.

I will not doubt; well anchored in the faith,
Like some staunch ship, my soul braves every gale,
So strong its courage that it will not fail
To breast the mighty unknown sea of Death.
Oh, may I cry when body parts with spirit,
I do not doubt, so listening worlds may hear it,
With my last breath, I TRUST IN THEE!

Thanks to Bob not only for his words but also for his life that reminds us of a truth spoken by Abraham Lincoln, "And in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years." I want to be like Bob when I grow up!

Serving with you,

Jimmy Martin
IBC General Secretary

2017 IBC Women's Conference: A Persona

Let's hit the road, Ruth!" I said, adding my suitcase to the trunk of my friend's car. The day had finally come for the 2017 IBC Women's Conference in Hoofddorp, The Netherlands. It seemed to take forever to arrive, but now it was here and our journey was underway!

We checked in and headed to the area where the conference would be held. Other ladies had already arrived and were doing the same. We came a day before the conference started to "switch gears" and to participate in the optional tour of the Corrie ten Boom House in Haarlem.

Friday morning, many of us gathered in the alley beside the Ten Boom Watch Shop. It was the same alley and side door where those needing the help of the ten Boom family would have come many years ago. The little door opened, and our guide began the tour by taking us into the family's living room. As we entered the room, I felt tears stinging my eyes as I thought of all the times the family had gathered together in this very room to read the Scriptures, sing songs together, and then reach out with the love of Christ to the Jews who had come to them for help during World War II.

Our guide narrated the story of how the family reached out to help during such a time of great oppression when lives hung in the balance. She explained how their own love for Christ led them to risk their lives for others. We heard about their arrest, experiences during their imprisonment, and how years later Corrie had the opportunity to show great forgiveness to one of the soldiers who had caused such pain and harm to her family. Our guide led us through the home, and we even had the option to crawl into the very hiding place where six Jewish people had hidden in the wall of Corrie's bedroom. We left encouraged and challenged by the bravery that this family had shown. It was the perfect way to set us in the right mindset for this conference that had a large focus on bold obedience.

As the time for the first session arrived, the room was alive with a joyful energy. There were 225 ladies enrolled to attend and the excitement was tangible! The conference began with a welcome and moved on to the country roll call. I think it is safe to say there were ladies from almost every part of the world present. I thought of Psalm 86:9-10: "All the nations You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord; they will bring glory to Your name. For You are great and do marvelous deeds; You alone are God."

Nicola Münster and her team IBC Re-United did a wonderful job leading us in praise and worship again this year. As we sang, I wondered how far through the hotel they were able to hear the beautiful melody



Nicola Münster and Jill Briscoe

of women singing wholeheartedly to their Heavenly Father. We are told in Scripture that the Lord inhabits the praises of His people and that our thanksgiving prepares a way for Him. During this time, our hearts were aligned with His, and He was welcomed with songs of worship.

Jill Briscoe was the key speaker of the conference. I had heard great things about the ministry she and her husband had accomplished through the years, but it was my first time hearing her speak in person. She spoke on Psalm 71, sharing her insights and personal experiences. They have had a long walk with the Lord and have seen His faithfulness. The stories of God's helping them in every situation they faced served as an example for how to step out in obedience regardless of our apprehension or fearfulness.

Here are some of the points from Jill's teaching that were a blessing to me:

- Pray in faith believing He will answer. Be ready to obey even if you will never see how God uses your obedience.
- Don't let your pain drive you from God.
- If we choose not to obey God, He will accomplish His purposes another way. He is offering us an opportunity to be blessed by participating in His work.
- Courage is often what comes after obedience.
- Once we are obedient, God will give us enough to sustain and empower us.

Annual Convention Meeting

23-25 October 2018
Celebrating the 500th
Anniversary of the
Reformation

Featuring inspirational messages by IBC pastors, reports from the 5 Strategy Directors and the General Secretary, Tuesday afternoon tour to Mainz, and Wednesday afternoon tour to Worms.

Report

- “Do not put your head on the pillow until you have put your nose in ‘The Book.’” (Stuart Briscoe)
- Rather than praying, “Come quickly Lord Jesus to save us from all of this,” we should have a heart that says, “Please wait, Lord...there are more who need to be saved.”
- It is natural to pray for deliverance from difficult circumstances but be prepared to faithfully follow Him even if He doesn’t.
- Remember that the lost are watching to see how you handle things to learn how faith in God makes a difference in your life.

Throughout the weekend there were multiple opportunities to be blessed by the testimonies and seminars that were offered. Melissa Pontiff shared her beautiful testimony about how God has used adoption in their life story. Lauren Bethell led the seminar, “Human Trafficking 101,” showing what we can do about this heartbreaking situation in our world. Denise Marshall’s seminar “Know, Believe, Live” offered Godly guidance from 2 Kings regarding decision-making in our lives. Siggi Levey opened our eyes to the epidemic of isolation and loneliness in our world today as she led the seminar, “Loneliness as an Opportunity.”

Saturday afternoon provided an opportunity to either enjoy some free time, participate in a prayer

walk through Amsterdam’s Red Light District, or take a tour of the Keukenhof Tulip Gardens. I had always wanted to visit the tulip gardens and was most grateful for that opportunity. Never in my life had I seen so many different varieties of tulips! I have a seven-year-old son, and we love to look at beautiful things in nature and say to each other, “Do you see that? My Father made that!” What a creative and artistic God we have!

Sunday morning before the regular sessions, there was an optional quiet time in the main conference room while praise and worship music played. A devotional was printed in the program that listed Scriptures to apply to all sorts of life situations. In the quiet of that time, it gave me and many other ladies an opportunity to process what God had spoken to us individually over this amazing weekend. After such a full schedule, it was good to meditate on His Word and solidify a plan for implementing what God had shown us.

If you haven’t attended the women’s conference yet, I would encourage you to attend this coming year. It is always a refreshing and uplifting time together. Hope to see you May 2018!

*Trace Odom
Metterich, Germany*



Women at the conference share and pray together.

Recap of Reformed: The Highlights of Euro

My first experience at Euroventure was this summer, and it was unforgettable! I've always loved leading youth retreats and camps, but somehow Euroventure seemed...bigger.

This spring, my students from Rome International Church replayed story after story of memories from Euroventure. They were like kids on Christmas Eve, eager to reunite with friends from years past. Their excitement amped up my interest, and their conversations drew me in.

It's funny because Euroventure is only one word: it's one week of camp once a year with one central theme. Yet it means the world to these students! The

easy it is to simply find our group of friends and ignore the rest....

But these kids exemplified our Savior. Jesus ate with the social outcasts, and so did our students. I could literally see the joy overflowing from the welcomed ones because they were included, valued, and loved!

Others were battling extensive and unimaginable troubles: self-harm, suicide, depression, anxiety, death of a loved one, guilt, shame... the list could continue. Others were debating whether God really exists. Some considered Jesus un-cool. And others didn't want to relinquish their control over their life.



Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell



main focus this year was Reform. Perhaps the most stunning element of reform I observed in the students was the genuine love and grace of the Lord evident in their words and actions.

There were a few students who had mild social disabilities, and a small handful who were just painfully shy or didn't know another soul at Euroventure. I wondered if most of the students would even notice this minor population. Would the teens pull them into their conversations or turn a cold shoulder? I was curious if they would invite them to activities or to sit with their group at lunch. We all know how



We live in a broken, fallen, hurting world. Yet time and time again the teenagers chose love, grace, and humility in order to help another. I personally observed these young adults respond like Jesus:

- A middle school girl was crying because she missed her mom and felt anxious. So her friends dried her tears and hugged her every single day.
- A high school girl shared shameful actions from her past. As she unearthed them, they were met by her friends like the gentle warmth of sun instead of a judgmental thunderstorm.
- A boy expressed doubts about salvation. Instead of discipline or disgust, the guys around him greeted his comments with understanding and intentional conversations.
- A high schooler recognized the muck in her heart and didn't like the way she treated the people that she loves. She was embraced by her peers and recognized that she's not alone. They reminded her

oventure 2017

that we all have to climb out of the muck in our hearts.

- A middle schooler began to cry due to frustration. Instead of avoidance, the other students asked what was wrong and how a peaceful solution could be reached. And they actually followed through instead of just offering shallow concern in the moment.
- Rather than pretending to have all of the answers during Bible study, one student asked questions and desired to learn more about God's Word. The remaining students of the small group followed suit since the stage was set with humility.
- Kids chose to attend Track Times (topical studies) based on their interests and not where their friends were (or the popular girl or the cute boy).
- Instead of being sore losers, so many students cheered on the winning teams. (This is a BIG deal because Euroventure kids are serious competitors!)

- And I never went to bed before 12:30 a.m. because the girls in my room wanted to engage in amazingly deep conversations about life and God and relationships. (But shhh, don't tell on us! Lights out was supposed to be at 11:00 p.m....)

I left camp reflecting on how good our God is and encouraged at how He is exemplified in the youth of our churches.

Euroventure may be only one week, but the Holy Spirit flooded our presence and lives were changed. Thirty-two students accepted Christ, and numerous others grew more intimate with our Savior. Reform began to take root in the hearts of those teenagers, and the fruit was already being produced!

Please join us in prayer that the 185 students who attended Euroventure 2017 are still being reformed today, and that they will continue to show God's love and grace to those around them.

Jana Aplin, Rome, Italy



Zac Hufty

Testimonials from Euroventure

This camp is the most AMAZING and best camp that I have ever even heard of! It is where I truly understood what it means to be Christlike. I also had my rebirth here. No words can express how much this camp is the best, it is soooo powerful and the beauty of the nature only adds to that. Also the preacher(s) here are some of the only preachers that make it interesting, useful, and fun at the same time. I rate this camp infinity out of ten.

Kevin Dulanto-Hausenstein, Oberursel, Germany

Year after year I look forward to Euroventure. Euroventure is more than a camp but a place you build life-long relationships with people across the globe in Christ.

Ellie Ward, Kaiserslautern, Germany

Euroventure is a happy and fun spirited place where Christians can come and fellowship together near the Swiss Alps.

Alondra Oquendo, Vicenza, Italy

It's lit. The Lord moves in everyone. The camp is one of the best camps ever.

Anonymous

This is the most amazing place. So touching. If you do not already know Christ, Euroventure will bring you to His Word!

Eli Pontiff, Ramstein, Germany

This camp is the best. This camp goes for 4 full days and 5 nights. The Holy Spirit lives in this camp. Every single camp about 20+

people give their life up to Jesus. It is the most inspirational and emotional camp ever. Tom and Zac, the two best preachers ever, bring more than half of the camp to tears. The sponsors are amazing. They all have words of wisdom. They are there when you need them. They will spend their time to pray with you. Also throughout this camp all Christians' faith will be strengthened. It is always interesting to listen to. All of the students there will support you. You will find that you will start to do things that you used to not do. The band is also incredible. They pick the best out of the best out of the best songs to sing. They make you clap along, swing your hands up to God, and sing praises to Him.

Everybody is separated into teams; there are dance offs, eat offs, cheers, flags, competitions, and much more. And then there is the kitchen. Every team gets K.D. (Kitchen Duty) once. It is fun and energetic. The food is great. There is also rec events where you get to do swimming, hiking, ropes course, canyoning, shopping, ice skating, tobogganing, sleep, and much more.

In conclusion, this camp is the most awesome camp ever. Everybody is supportive.

Kevin Dulanto-Hausenstein, Oberursel, Germany

My favorite part of Euroventure is always seeing God move in the lives of my students. I'm fed and learn just as much as them and love the relationship I'm able to build.

Nikki Kennemer, Sponsor, Oberursel, Germany

Connecting . . . the Body of Christ Joined

It was a new time, a new location, and a new format but the spirit of fellowship was the same. Connect 17 was held 3-6 August in Neustadt on the Weinstrasse, Germany with the theme “The body . . . joined together.”

From the morning sessions with our speaker, Rodney Woo, to the wonderful evening sitting around the bonfire, the CONNECT17 conference seemed to accomplish everything for which we had hoped and prayed,” said Nick Howard, co-coordinator of the conference with his wife Susan.

“I loved the fact that people never seemed to be bored or to lack enough to do and see,” he said, “even though the schedule was intentionally light. They

truly connected with one another, enjoyed making new friends, learning new things, and simply enjoying the beautiful setting. I am already looking forward to the next CONNECT conference!”

More than 150 adults, children, and youth participated in this first family conference.

In addition to Woo’s morning messages, adults and youth attended one of five seminars. “Helping Families who are Struggling” was taught by Sandi Black, “Understanding and Parenting Teenagers” was taught by Wes Black, “The Rooftop” was taught by Dennis Pethers, “Connecting with Muslims” was taught by Bruce Boeckel, and “A Scriptural Basis for the International Church from Acts” was led by Rodney Woo.




Together

Woo's messages centered on three different types of connections – a connected heart (2 Corinthians 7:9-11), covenant connections (Romans 12:4-5, Hebrews 10:24-25), and global connections (Romans 1:14-17). We need these three types of connections, Woo said, – a connection to God, a connection to each other, and a connection to the world. Our connection to God is marked by our repentance, our turning away from sin and our turning to God. Our connection to each other is encompassed by our encouraging each other in our walk with God through loving God and each other and serving with good deeds and motivating each other to connect. Our connection to the world compels us to reach the

world with the message of hope that we each possess. Video recordings of the messages are available on the IBC website.

The musical worship times were led by worship teams from IBC Bremen, Germany; International Christian Fellowship, Oberursel, Germany; and Faith Baptist Church, Kaiserslautern, Germany.

The children spent the weekend as “Galactic Starveyors,” discovering that the God of creation wants a personal relationship with each of us. Jill Arrington from Boaz, Alabama, USA, brought a team of 10 to lead the children’s program. 



Rodney Woo



photos by Bogi Photography

IBC Assists Fire Victims in India through EBMI

On 14 May, a fire from cooking in one of the tribal families' huts spread through the village of Eguva Bandarlappalli, Andhra Pradesh, India. Nine huts were completely destroyed while another 29 huts were partially destroyed. By God's grace, no one died. The victims of the fire are without food, clothing, shelter, bedding, or cooking utensils.

The government has promised to build 38 pucca houses for the victims, but construction will take

nine months. In the mean time, the families needed temporary tarp shelters to protect them from the hot summer sun.

Funds from the IBC's Emergency Response (Urgent Needs) funds were sent through European Baptist Mission International to help with the situation. The 2940 EUR sent was used to buy rice, sugar, dall, oil, clothing, school books and bags, blankets, mats, tarps, and cooking utensils for the families.



Men's Conference Set for 11-15 January 2018

Like many men who attend the IBC Men's Conference, I was invited by Siggie Schreiber. "My brother" Siggie said to me in his beautiful Hannover accent, "You must join us at the Men's Conference this January."

I initially felt hesitant. I had just finished German language school, and my wife and I were still adjusting to our new life in Germany. A conference did not seem like something I needed at the moment. "I don't know if I have time," I told Siggie.

"Of course you have time," Siggie replied, "And you can ski the beautiful Swiss Alps." With those final words, Siggie convinced me to go.

Each year the IBC Men's Conference draws men from all over the world to Lenk, nestled in a picturesque valley in the center of snowy Swiss Alps, to connect, fellowship, and praise God. Each year men tell me just how much the conference means to them.

Jeremy Woods, family minister at International Christian Fellowship, Oberursel, Germany, told me, "I've had some great conversations. It is a week-

end for men to have input together, who are more open because of the activities." When asked about the optional skiing during free time, Jeremy replied, "Incredible slopes, the awesomeness of God in the mountains, the fellowship with men on the mountain, it is amazing."

It is my privilege to invite you to join the annual Men's Conference in Lenk, Switzerland, on 11-15 January 2018. Our theme this year, "Seek The Lord," comes from Isaiah 56. Each evening Ryan Whitley, pastor of CrossPoint Church in Birmingham, Alabama, USA, will challenge us to dive deeply into this profound passage to see how we can seek the Lord in our daily lives.

Along with evening sessions, this conference offers men the opportunity to participate in various day seminars including: "Mentoring Men," "Godly Husbands," "Fathers and Sons," and "The Grace of God." Of course, we will have plenty of free time for hiking, fellowship, and skiing.

Please prayerfully consider joining us this year both as an individual and with your church. I believe God will work in our hearts in mighty ways. See you in January!

Taylor Whitley



Munich, Germany

On 30 July, International Baptist Church, Munich, Germany, said good-bye to Pastor Scott Chadwick and his wife Sandy and welcomed Pastor Chris Carson and

his wife Jeanine. Strengthening Churches Director Gary Preston brought greetings from the IBC and, along with the church, prayed for the two couples. IBC Gener-

al Secretary Jimmy Martin could not be in attendance but sent a video message to the church.

Darmstadt, Germany

ON THE EVENING of Saturday, 13 May, approximately 65 people gathered for the first of what is hoped to become an annual event – the Converge International Fellowship Faith & Science Forum.

The event took place in a large conference room of the H+ Hotel in Darmstadt, chosen as a neutral venue more likely to encourage participation from non-churchgoers. In the end, over half of the attendees were not from Converge International Fellowship.

The guest speaker was Professor Barbara Drossel, head of the Department of Theoretical Physics at the Technical University of Darmstadt. Drossel has a wide experience of presenting and writing on the topic of science and faith.

After a short introduction, Drossel spoke in English for an hour on the topic, “Are science and faith incompatible?”. At the conclusion of her talk, there was a

question and answer session, and Drossel fielded a wide range of challenging questions from the audience, which included several Muslims. Afterwards, having expressed our thanks to the speaker, everyone gathered in an adjoining room for refreshments and continued some animated discussions.

With Drossel’s permission, the talk was video-recorded and is available on DVD for those who were unable to attend in person.

The event was partially funded through a generous grant from the International Baptist Church Ministries, and we would like to record our grateful thanks for this invaluable support.

It is hoped to hold a second Faith & Science Forum in 2018.



Adam Williams Barbara Drossel

Jurbise, Belgium

SUMMER IS A TIME of transition at the International Bible Church, Jurbise, Belgium! Given the number of military families of various nationalities that make up our church community, some transition out and others move into the area. But even with the amount of coming and going, the Lord continues to “add to our number” (Acts 2:47), strengthening the fellowship of believers in this communi-



ty. Though small in number (about 110 counting children) we are truly diverse in nationality, representing approximately 16 different countries. We’ve chosen to symbolize this diversity in unity by the various flags that surround our auditorium.

Not only is summer a time of transition, but it is also the highlight of our ministry to children. Each year our VBS program reaches approximately 70-80 children in the area. Our theme this year was “Galactic Starveyors,” based off of Colossians 1:15-17. Several children indicated their desire to trust Christ as their Savior, and many others were strengthened in their faith. Our VBS is also one of our primary points of contact with new military families moving into the area during the summer months.

We are blessed at IBC to have our own property which is located in such a strate-

gic position for reaching this community. One of our challenges, however, has been renovating our building in order to meet Belgian fire-safety codes. To meet the need, we initiated “Project Nehemiah” in 2016 in view of “rebuilding the walls.” After months of hard work and financial investment, we are now nearly ready for our final inspection! While there is yet much for this building and property to better reflect the beauty of the gospel, we are so thankful for the gifts received and the pending approval of our fire-safety changes. More on our ongoing “Project Nehemiah” can be found at www.ibt-jurbise.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Project-Nehemiah-IBC-Jurbise-Belgium-Version-1.0.pdf.

David Stevens

Antwerp, Belgium

IBC GENERAL SECRETARY VISITS

On 11 June, Antwerp Christian Fellowship, Belgium, hosted a breakfast in the inner courtyard at De Stroming as part of a visit by IBC General Secretary Jimmy Martin. Alongside the ACF elders, Jimmy addressed a group of ACF ministry volunteers and leaders, sharing on the broader vision of the IBC affiliation and how each affiliated church occupies a unique position within the IBC family. After the breakfast, Jimmy shared an encouraging message on the first churches, as described in the Bible, as models for the modern church.

David Hamburger

YOUTH GROUP GROWING

We have seen God building up the ACF family in His unique and wonderful ways over many years. One such way is through leading more people to His flock. This growth has especially been noted across the various children's ministries. But, one ministry seems to be bursting at the seams, and for many this may come as a bit of a surprise: the ACF Youth Ministry has recently sent more than 20 youth to participate in an international summer youth camp. This is an impressive number for a church with an adult attendance of approximately 200 people. And the youth have certainly started to make their pres-



Jimmy Martin and ACF meet.

ence known by heading up fundraising initiatives, including developing ACF's very first merchandise – custom branded bags, wrist bands, and t-shirts. We recently saw several youth testify of God's redemptive power in their lives; and there is an energy and excitement about them that is palpable.

The Youth Ministry is led by a leadership group that have shown their passion for the ministry in truly unique ways.

This eclectic and energetic group is composed of an impressive cross-continental representation: from Ecuador (Andrea), and the US (Tiffany), across the Atlantic to Gambia (Edward) and Nigeria (Dimma), over to the sub-continent of India (Tanmay) and back around to Belgium (Daniel). This is a microcosm of the multicultural nature of ACF at large.

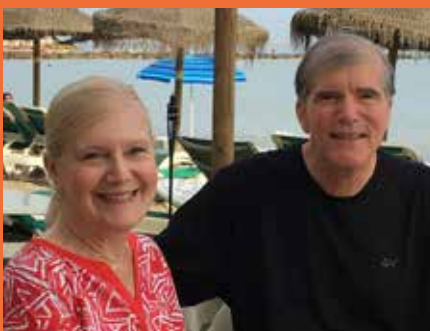
Byron-Mahieu van der Linde



Part of the ACF Youth Leadership team.

PASTOR PROFILE

HARRY SMITH – Calahonda, Spain



WIFE: Joy Smith

CHILDREN: Jimmy and Scott

GRANDCHILDREN: Ashley, Sommer, Bailey, Ella, Hannah

YEARS AT CURRENT IBC CHURCH:

Interim at IBC Calahonda Spain since February 2017

OTHER IBC CHURCHES SERVED: IBC Kiev (2008), Düsseldorf (2010-11), Sofia (2014) and Bielefeld (2014-15); Calvary Heidelberg (1994).

BRIEF PROFILE OF YOUR CHURCH: CIBC is a small but vibrant church with a strong international flavor. The worship is lively and Christ-honoring. As a resort community in the Costa del Sol of Spain, we usually have more visitors than members present for services. The church is so well-loved; people return year after year to sing to the Lord and hear Christ-centered, Bible-based mes-

sages as well as renew great fellowship. WAYS YOU ARE INVOLVED IN THE IBC: I have only served as interim and supply pastor but, like so many who are, I have come to see the IBC as my "home" convention.

OTHER MINISTRY INTERESTS: I love to preach, teach, and pray with those who desire ministry.

PERSONAL INTERESTS AND HOBBIES: Travel (surprise!), reading thriller novels and history, golf, tennis, racquetball.

FAVORITE/LIFE BIBLE VERSE:

Galatians 2:20